

DIAGNOSIS.—Resembles closely *Passerella iliaca megarhyncha* but differs in less robust bill, and slightly paler (ashier) tone of gray on upper surface; differs from *Passerella iliaca schistacea* (as represented by specimens from north-western Nevada), in thicker bill, longer claws, and paler dorsal coloration. (See figs. 54a, b, c, d.)

MATERIAL.—Nine specimens, including the type, from Mono County, California, as follows: from Mono Lake P. O., 6500 feet altitude, 4; from Walker Lake, 8000 feet, 3; from Parker Creek at 7500 and 8600 feet, 2.

REMARKS.—The Mono Fox Sparrow adds another race to the assemblage of pale-colored forms breeding in the western United States. It is not expedient to attempt at this time to determine the range of the new form beyond what is indicated by the few localities given.

Berkeley, California, August 13, 1917.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The Oldest American Ornithologist.—For twenty-two years the record for longevity among American ornithologists has been held by the late George Newbold Lawrence, who was born October 20, 1806, and died January 17, 1895, at the age of 88 years, 2 months and 28 days. This record has now been broken by a well known Californian and one of the honorary members of the Cooper Ornithological Club. On June 12, 1917, Mr. Lyman Belding¹ celebrated his 88th birthday and on September 9 passed the limit reached by Lawrence.

Comparatively few ornithologists have exceeded this age. Dr. Jean Louis Cabanis, editor of the *Journal fur Ornithologie*, died only two weeks before his 90th birthday; Dr. Alfred Russell Wallace lacked two months of 91; Dr. Rudolf Amandus Philippi of Santiago, Chili, almost reached the age of 96; William Bernhard Tegetmeier, the English aviculturist, lived 96 years and two weeks; and Dr. Sven Nilsson, the eminent Swedish ornithologist, held the world's record among ornithologists, having attained the age of nearly 97. Nilsson died November 30, 1883, at the age of 96 years, 8 months and 22 days.

Belding, at the time that he made his first trip to Lower California in 1881, was several years older than Bryant, Gambel, Grayson, Heermann, Kennerly or Suckley were when they died, and when his first book on ornithology appeared, the "Land Birds of the Pacific District", he was older than Bendire, Cassin, Coues, Lesson or Wilson were when they ceased publishing. With his present strong constitution and usual good health there is reason to hope that his span of life may exceed that of any of his ornithological predecessors in other lands.—T. S. PALMER, *Washington, D. C., July 25, 1917.*

A Portable Nest.—Having just concluded a rather interesting observation upon a nest of the House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) and its owners, it occurred to me that an account of it might prove of more or less interest to readers of THE CONDOR. It happened that a pair of these well known little birds chose as a nesting place a shelf in a lean-to which was being used as a garage. The nest was built during a week's absence of the owners of the lean-to, who found it very much in the way upon their return. Not wishing to see the nest destroyed, as the birds were doing no harm, I decided to try a little experiment, and as carefully as possible I moved the nest three or four feet to one side on to a beam about fifteen inches higher than its former site, and just under the lower end of the roof. The next time I went into the shed the female flew out, exposing an egg to view.

Each day the nest was moved from one to several feet, until it had rested in every available spot in the lean-to, the birds following it wherever it was placed and laying in all six eggs. And these were all successfully hatched out. After the youngsters appeared I continued to move the nest about, the parents following it. One day, however, my partner remained all day in the "garage" working upon the car, and this proved to

¹For a portrait, see THE CONDOR, II, January, 1900, p. 2.